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Garth Ennis Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

FIFTEEN

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The BOYS™

FIFTEEN

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.

Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most dangerous force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in **The Boys**.

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GOOD FOR THE SOUL

part one

I'VE COME TO FIND OUT IF YOU'RE THERE OR NOT.

YOU SEE, WHAT I...DID...

WELL, PART OF ME STILL CAN'T BELIEVE I HAD IT IN ME TO DO THAT, BUT THERE'S NO DENYING IT HAPPENED. I DID IT. IT WAS REAL.

BUT WHAT THEY DID, AND EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED SINCE... IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THAT'S ON YOU. THAT MAYBE, I DON'T KNOW, THAT YOU'RE PUNISHING ME.

INRI

AND THAT'S THE PART I FIND KIND OF SCARY.

BUT THAT'S ON ME. I MADE THE CHOICE AND IT'S MY RESPONSIBILITY, I'M NOT BLAMING ANYONE EXCEPT MYSELF.

BECAUSE IF YOU ARE THERE, THAT WOULD SUGGEST YOU'RE JUST A LITTLE BIT SADISTIC.

ONLY THE *BIGGEST PHILISTINE* WOULD CONTEND THAT *EDGE COMICS'* MOST GROUNDBREAKING TITLE OF THE NINETIES WAS ANYTHING OTHER THAN THE SUBLIME *NONCEMANCER...*

VINNIE'S COMICS BASEBALL CARDS. ACTION FIGURES

WOK

THAT'S *BULLSHIT,* DUDE! EVERYONE KNOWS IT WAS *REVEREND SWEAR!*

OH, DEAR...!

I DUNNO, I ALWAYS KINDA LIKED *BUSYDICK: THE ONLY MAN...*

AH. A FELLOW SOPHISTICATE.

EDGE COMICS ARE *ELF-TASTIC,* DUDE!

EXCUSE ME...?

I WONDER IF I COULD ASK YOU GENTLEMEN A TEENSY-TINY QUESTION?

YES...

HAVE ANY OF YOU SEEN, ANYWHERE AROUND THE STORE, A SIGN OR NOTICE THAT WOULD INDICATE THAT YOU WERE IN A *LIBRARY...?*

UH...NO...

SO WHAT THE FUCK MAKES YA THINK YA CAN READ THE GODDAMN FUCKIN' BOOKS WITHOUT PAYIN' FOR THE MUTHUHFUCKIN' THINGS?!!

HALF A FUCKIN' HOUR YA BEEN CREASIN' THE FUCKIN' COVUHS, SWEATIN' ON 'EM WIT YA JIZ-STAINED FUCKIN' FINGUHS, TALKIN' YA STOOPID GODDAMN BULLSHIT! AN' I HAVE TO STAND HERE AN' FUCKIN' LISTEN TO IT?!

AAHHNNNNHH...!

GET OUT! GET THE FUCK OUT! YA COME BACK IN HERE, I'M GONNA VIOLATE ALL THREE A' YA WITH A GODDAMN MARV STATUE!

GO!!

WAAAHHHNNNNHHH...!

YOU EVER THINK GUISEPPE MIGHT BE A WEE BIT BLASÉ ABOUT YOUR CUSTOMER BASE, SEAN?

WELL...FRIENDS WE GOT, YA AIN'T GOTTA DO A WHOLE LOTTA BUSINESS TO STAY IN BUSINESS. IF YA KNOW WHAT I MEAN.

YA MAY AS WELL GO ON DOWN, HUGHIE. HE'S EXPECTIN' YA.

HE'S NO' GONNA BE GETTIN' A BLOW-JOB OFF SOME SCRUBBER OR ANYTHIN', IS HE?

HAW.

YOU BASTARD! YOU FUCKING SCUMBAG! I HATE YOU, I HATE YOU, I HATE YOU!

D'YOU HEAR ME, YOU ASSHOLE! I HATE YOU!!

NOT FUCKIN' YET YOU DON'T, LUV--

GUMFF

HA HA HA HA HA OH, YESSSS--!

MMMNNNNGGHHHH!!

IT'S BEEN SIX MONTHS.

AND I DON'T KNOW, I...

GUESS I'M STILL A SUPERHERO...

"I MEAN I KNEW IT WOULD BE DIFFERENT FROM THE YOUNG AMERICANS, BUT...WELL, WITH THEM I DID A LITTLE BIT OF CRIMEFIGHTING AND DISASTER RELIEF, AND A LOT OF WORK WITH KIDS AND CHURCH CHARITIES.

"WITH THE SEVEN I'VE DONE ALMOST ***NO*** CRIMEFIGHTING OR DISASTER RELIEF--AND EVEN THEN ALL I DID WAS FLY COVER WHILE A-TRAIN AND JACK FROM JUPITER RECAPTURED THE SUCKLING--AND AN AWFUL LOT OF CORPORATE APPEARANCES.

"WHICH, IN TURN, SEEM TO NECESSITATE SOME PRETTY IN-DEPTH RE-READING OF OUR CONTRACTS. THAT'S GOTTEN TO BE A BIT OF A RECURRING THEME.

"AND THEN THERE'S THE MAN FROM VOUGHT-AMERICAN.

"HE SITS AND WATCHES EVERY MEETING, NEVER SAYS A WORD. JUST ***SEES.*** HE'S IN A ROOM WITH PEOPLE WHO CAN SLIDE THEIR FINGERS THROUGH TITANIUM, AND I DON'T HEAR HIS HEARTRATE OR HIS BREATHING ALTER ONE IOTA.

"THERE'S NOT A SINGLE DOUBT IN HIS MIND THAT HE'S IN CHARGE."

"BUT YES, THE CORPORATE THINGS. FOR VOUGHT, OF COURSE.

"I MET VIC THE VEEP THE VERY FIRST ONE I WENT TO. I WAS AMAZED. IT'S NOT THE STUFF PEOPLE SAY ABOUT HIS ACCENT, OR THE WAY HE MANGLES WORDS--IT'S THAT HE GENUINELY ONLY SEEMS TO HAVE ONE SINGLE FACIAL EXPRESSION...

"THAT'S SOMETHING ELSE I NEVER THOUGHT I'D DO: DENIGRATE A MAN HOLDING THE OFFICE OF VICE-PRESIDENT.

"REFER TO HIM BY A NICKNAME, NEVER MIND CAST ASPERSIONS ON HIS INTELLECT."

BUT I DON'T KNOW.

I DID IT, AND YOU DIDN'T EXACTLY RUSH TO STRIKE ME DOWN.

MAYBE I'M JUST A SLOW LEARNER.

ACTUALLY, IN LIGHT OF WHAT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT, I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANY MAYBE ABOUT IT.

AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, THE STUPID BITCH DESERVES IT...

IF SHE CAN'T EVEN FIGURE OUT WE DON'T *GO* UNDERCOVER-- I MEAN WE'RE THE SEVEN, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE, NOT FUCKING DONNIE BRASCO...

WHAT'S THIS?

YOU DIDN'T TELL HIM ABOUT...?

YOU TELL HIM.

OKAY, WELL, WE CONVINCE YOU-KNOW-WHO THE ***FOURTEEN*** ARE BACK, AND WE TELL HER THEY'RE INFILTRATING HUMAN SOCIETY--IN CHELSEA. WE HAVE TO GET A MOLE INTO THEIR ORGANIZATION, SO IF SHE'LL CHANGE INTO HER CIVVIES AND GO TO A CERTAIN BAR AT A CERTAIN TIME, SHE'LL MEET A SECRET CONTACT WHO'LL TELL HER WHAT TO DO.

AND THE NAME OF THE CONTACT IS, WE TELL HER...

"LESLEY BEAN."

OH, JESUS...!

"AH, EXCUSE ME, I'M LOOKING FOR LES BEAN? HELLO, YES, IS THERE A LES BEAN HERE?"

ANYWAY, SHE GOES INTO THIS DYKE PLACE AND STARTS ASKING AROUND FOR OLD LES, AND EVENTUALLY ONE OF THEM TAKES OFFENSE AND PUNCHES HER.

BOOM. SHE PANICS. ONE MILLION CANDLEPOWER, BLIND RUG-MUNCHERS RUNNING AROUND SCREAMING LIKE BANSHEES, EXIT NANCY FUCKING DREW STAGE LEFT.

"UM...I DON'T THINK YOU TOLD ME THE RIGHT BAR..."

HA HA HA HA HA...!

UH-HUH. VERY GOOD.

BETTER THAN *MIKE HUNT,* AT ANY RATE.

DUDE, WE SHOULD TRY THAT NEXT--!

SHIT, WHY NOT, SHE'S BEEN DUMB ENOUGH TO FALL FOR JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING ELSE...

ACTUALLY, SHE'S NOT STUPID, THAT'S THE INTERESTING THING.

STREET JOURNAL.

SHE'S A BELIEVER.

A SUBTLE BUT IMPORTANT DISTINCTION.

WHAT?

SEE WHERE I'M GOING WITH THIS?

AIN'T SEEN THE OTHER ONE AROUND, HAVE YOU, KID?

UH...NO, SORRY...

SHIT...

DON'T EVER GET YOUR FEET CUT OFF, I TELL YOU.

BUTCHER TELL YOU WHAT THIS IS ABOUT...?

NO, MISTER...LEGEND. NO, HE JUST TOLD ME I HAD TO PICK SOMETHIN' UP.

AIN'T NO ***MISTER*** ABOUT IT, KID. AIN'T NOTHIN' MORE OR LESS THAN ***THE LEGEND.***

NAH, YOUR BOSS BULLSHITTED YOU--PROBABLY FIGURED YOU'D HEAR WHAT IT WAS AN' PANIC. YOUR OLD PAL THE ***BLARNEY COCK'S*** BACK IN TOWN.

WH...

WHAT...?

WAIT A MINUTE, YOU MEAN THERE'S A NEW ONE? ANOTHER SUPE'S TAKEN ON THE NAME?

NO, I MEAN THE SON OF A BITCH YOU KILLED'S COME BACK FROM THE DEAD. THE ACTUAL BLARNEY COCK.

WHERE *IS* THE GODDAMN THING...?

AW, FUCK ME...!

THESE ASSHOLES ARE ALWAYS DOIN' IT, KID. JUST LIKE IN THE *FUCKING COMIC BOOKS...*

IDEA IS, EVEN THE *GRAVE* CAN'T HOLD A *REAL HERO.* PUBLIC SEES SOME *COCKSUCKER* ALIVE AN' WELL AFTER HE *DIED,* IT MAKES 'EM THINK THE SUPES ARE MORE SUPER THAN *EVER.*

ALL *BULLSHIT.* THERE'S ENOUGH *COMPOUND V* LEFT IN THEIR BRAINS TO KINDA *JUMP-START 'EM.* THEY DO A COUPLA P.R. APPEARANCES, WAVE TO THE CAMERA--AFTER THAT THEY'RE KEPT *WELL* IN THE BACKGROUND...

SO, TEENAGE KIX ARE HAVIN' THE PRESS OVER NEXT WEEK, SHOW 'EM THEIR LITTLE MIRACLE BUDDY. WE WANT *YOU* TO MAKE SURE THERE AIN'T NOTHIN' FOR 'EM TO *SHOW...*

WHY, ARE THEY NO' QUITE RIGHT?

YOU MEAN KILL HIM? AGAIN?

WHY *ME?*

THEY'RE *RETARDED.* YOU CAN RE-ANIMATE A BODY, BUT A *MIND...* GOOD FUCKING *LUCK.*

POINT BUTCHER'S TRYNNA MAKE: THE *BOYS* KILL YOU, YOU *STAY KILLED...*

AYE.

TO ME, AS WELL AS THE FUCKIN' SUPES.

COME AGAIN...?

HE LIKES REMINDIN' ME I HAVE TO HURT FOLK. SO I HANDLE THIS ONE ALONE, SOMEONE I'VE ALREADY... CHRIST...

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU, THEN?

LET'S JUST SAY YOU'D BE DOIN' ME A *FAVOR.*

HUH.

ALL I'D REALLY BE DOIN'S PUTTIN' A CORPSE BACK IN THE GROUND, IS THAT RIGHT?

YEAH...

AN'... YOU'D OWE ME A FAVOR BECAUSE OF THIS?

YEAH...

RIGHT: AS SOON AS IT'S OVER I'M COMIN' BACK DOWN HERE, AN' THEN YOU AN' ME'RE GONNA HAVE A WEE TALK. AN' YOU'RE GONNA ANSWER ALL MY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BOYS, AN' WHAT THEY'VE BEEN UP TO OVER THE YEARS, AN' *BUTCHER.* ALL OF IT.

BECAUSE I'VE BEEN WORKIN' FOR HIM FOR SIX MONTHS NOW, AN' HALF THE TIME I THINK I'M NONE THE FUCKIN' WISER.

SOUNDS TO ME LIKE YOU'VE LEARNED *PLENTY,* KID.

YOU GOT YOURSELF A *DEAL.*

I GUESS IT MIGHT BE *GOOD* FOR EVERYONE TO KNOW JUST WHERE THEY STAND...

"EVENTUALLY I WENT HOME.

"MAYBE TO VISIT, MAYBE FOR GOOD. I WASN'T SURE.

015
USRAIL

"I DIDN'T FLY.

"DIDN'T FEEL LIKE IT."

"I NEEDED DRUMMER BOY. I NEEDED THAT CLOSENESS WE'D HAD WHEN WE LED THE TEAM TOGETHER, THAT ***WARMTH,*** THAT SENSE THAT EVERYTHING WOULD BE ALL RIGHT.

"I THOUGHT OUR LOVE WAS STRONG ENOUGH THAT I COULD STAND THE TIME APART, BUT NOW ALL I COULD IMAGINE WAS FLINGING MYSELF INTO HIS ARMS AND NEVER LETTING GO AGAIN..."

CAPES for CHRIST

REALLY, ALL I WANTED WAS TO BE WITH SOMEONE WHO'D BE KIND TO ME.

I'LL GIVE YOU THREE GUESSES.

DRUMMER BOY?

HOLY MARY?

15 A-K

OH, SHIT.

STARLIGHT--?

OH JESUS, ANNIE, WE--WE HAD NO IDEA YOU WERE COMING--!

NO, I...I NEVER CALLED, DID I...?

SO I GUESS WE FINALLY HAVE A TABLE FOR MEETINGS...

ANNIE, I'M SORRY-- I--IT WAS--

YOU SAID...ESS AITCH EYE TEE.

AND YOU TOOK THE LORD'S NAME IN VAIN.

"FILL IN THE BLANKS.

YOUNG AMERICANS

"HE WAS LONELY. HE WAS SCARED. HE THOUGHT I MIGHT HAVE DUMPED HIM, NOW I'D JOINED THE SEVEN.

"IT WAS JUST THE ONCE. OKAY, IT WASN'T JUST THE ONCE, IT HAD GOTTEN TO BE A KIND OF THING. THE TEAM HAD FIGURED I WAS GONE FOR GOOD; THEY'D LOOSENED UP A LITTLE, THERE WAS STUFF I HADN'T KNOWN ABOUT WHEN I WAS WITH THEM."

HOMELANDER

ENERGY

I CAME BACK TO NEW YORK.

I HAD NOWHERE ELSE TO GO.

INRI

IT MAKES ME SAD, BECAUSE THERE ARE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD THAT THINK *GOOD* HAS TO MEAN *STUPID*, AND I WAS ALWAYS SURE THINGS DIDN'T HAVE TO BE THAT WAY.

BUT... HERE I AM.

MY FRIENDS, MY HEROES, THE PEOPLE I LOVED, ALL THE THINGS I BELIEVED ABOUT THE WORLD: THEY'RE LIES.

THEY'RE SHATTERED.

SO IS MY GOD A LIE TOO, IS THAT THE WAY IT IS?

YOU TELL ME.

YOU FUCKING PRICK.

PISS OFF. YOU KNOW YOU DESERVED THAT.

WHAT?!

IN WHAT FUCKING TWISTED CORNER OF YOUR MIND--WAIT A MINUTE, IS THIS ABOUT *MOSCOW?* IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT?

BLOODY RIGHT IT IS. AS WELL YOU KNOW, SO DON'T COME THE INNOCENT WITH ME.

GROW UP, WILL YOU?

JUST THINK ABOUT IT FOR ONE MINUTE: THE IVANS DISCOVER AN ATTEMPTED COUP D'ETAT--INVOLVING THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY--BACKED BY AN AMERICAN CORPORATION. SEE IF YOU CAN TELL ME WHAT HAPPENS NEXT.

BUT THEY WOULDN'T'VE DISCOVERED FUCK ALL, WOULD THEY? THE WHOLE POINT WAS TO HAVE IT TO HOLD OVER THE CUNTS AT VOUGHT, BUT YOU DIDN'T HAVE THE BOLLOCKS FOR THAT!

'COS YOU'RE AS TERRIFIED A' THE SUPES AS EVERY OTHER WANKER IN THE GAME...

VOUGHT-AMERICAN HAVE A LOT OF SUPERPOWER AT THEIR DISPOSAL, NO ONE'S DENYING THAT. BUT HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT WHAT ELSE THEY HAVE?

FRIENDS, BUTCHER. IN CONGRESS, IN THE MEDIA, IN THE WHITE HOUSE. VIC THE VEEP, FOR GOD'S SAKE...

HOW FAR DO YOU THINK WE'D ***REALLY*** GET IF WE TRIED SOMETHING LIKE THIS?

IT'S TOO LATE, ANYWAY. THINGS HAVE ALREADY BEEN SET IN MOTION.

MEANIN' JOSEF CHEMENKO'S GOIN' SWIMMIN', AN' THE BLOKE I NABBED'S ALREADY FALLEN OUT OF A C-130 OVER THE BERING STRAIT.

GIVE US A SHOUT IF YOU EVER WANT THAT QUESTION ANSWERED, MADAM DIRECTOR.

OH, DON'T BE SO DRAMATIC, WE BOTH KNOW YOU'RE NOT ABOUT TO JUMP SHIP.

I'D HAVE THOUGHT YOU'D BE HAPPY, ANYWAY, YOU WIPED OUT EVERY SINGLE SUPE INVOLVED--AND YES, THANKS FOR LEAVING US TO CLEAN THAT ONE UP. VERY MUCH APPRECIATED, I ASSURE YOU.

LITTLE NINA TRIED TO DO FOR US, REMEMBER, ON THIS VOUGHT TOSSER'S RECOMMENDATION. I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE LEAVIN' ALL THAT MUSCLE AROUND FOR THE NEXT THING THE TWATS'VE GOT PLANNED.

YOU KNOW PERFECTLY WELL I MEANT NINA NAMENKO, NOT A HUNDRED AND FIFTY OTHER PEOPLE--!

BESIDES, THE ORDER SAID TERMINATE. I TERMINATED.

A HUNDRED AN' FIFTY SUPES, RAYNER. DON'T GET SENTIMENTAL, EH?

YOU HAVE COMPOUND V IN YOU TOO, YOU KNOW IT'S NOT AS SIMPLE AS THAT.

YOU SEE, THIS IS THE KIND OF STUFF THAT WORRIES ME ABOUT YOU. THAT REALLY DOES GET ME THINKING.

WELL IF I EVER STICK A CAPE ON AN' START USIN' ORDINARY HUMAN BEIN'S TO WIPE ME ARSE WITH, YOU'LL KNOW YOU WERE RIGHT TO WORRY, WON'T YOU?

LOOK... I DIDN'T MEAN...

YOU REMEMBER THE DAY WE MET?

WHAT?

NOVEMBER OH-ONE. CHRIST, THE FUCKIN' GLEAM YOU HAD IN YOUR EYE.

BE NICE TO PUT IT DOWN TO ME WINNIN' CHARM, BUT THAT WEREN'T IT. DAKOTA BOB HAD JUST GONE INTO PAKISTAN.

B-52 STRIKES WERE SPILLIN' OVER INTO AFGHANISTAN. QUITE A LONG WAY OVER, AS A MATTERA FACT.

AN' YOU AN' THE REST WERE FUCKIN' LOVIN' IT, 'COS EVERY VILLAGE GOT HIT--FORGETTIN' THE WOMEN AN' KIDDIES FOR A MINUTE-- MEANT ANOTHER LOTTA TALIBAN GONE.

AN' EVERY *ONE* A' THEM CUNTS WENT DOWN MEANT ANOTHER EYEWITNESS DEAD AN' BURIED. TO THE SHIT THE COMPANY HAD 'EM DOIN', WHEN YOU WERE ALL SUCH GOOD MATES BACK IN THE EIGHTIES.

RUNNIN' GUNS TO PEOPLE YOU SHOULDN'T. WETWORK IN FRIENDLY COUNTRIES. HEROIN.

NO WRITTEN ORDERS FOR ANY A' THEM STRIKES. BUT IF THERE WAS, I WONDER WHOSE NAME WOULDA BEEN ON THEM?

WE DESERVE EACH OTHER, YOU AN' ME.

YOU'RE NOT THERE.

ALL MY LIFE--

ANNIE?

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, SWEETHEART?

DO YOU REMEMBER ME, I'M--

HUGHIE!!

HUGHIE, I'M SORRY, BUT PLEASE, ***PLEASE*** BE NICE TO ME--JUST FOR A MINUTE, JUST DON'T DO ANYTHING AWFUL, JUST--

PLEASE BE ***NICE...!***

AW, ANNIE--

WHY ON EARTH WOULDN'T I BE?

JINGS.

next: FEMALE TROUBLE